DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/2/2010 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brosnan et al (US 6,682,423 B2) in view of Garahi et al (US 2001/0041612 A1) and Kaminkow et al (US 2003/0036425 A1).

4. Re claim 1, Brosnan discloses a gaming network comprising:

a plurality of gaming machines (figure 1A);

one or more information servers coupled to the gaming machines, the one or more information servers structured to store data related to the plurality of gaming machines and related to players of the gaming machines, and to generate data for use

on the gaming network (figure 1A, 71-74, column 6, lines 15-46);

a plurality of secure wireless devices structured to couple to the one or more information servers (figure 1A, 52d-g, column 10, lines 2-47);

a secure wireless receiver, other than the one or more information servers, structured to couple to at least one of the secure wireless devices (figure 1A, 52a-c, column 10, lines 2-47). While it is not explicitly disclosed that the connection of Brosnan is a secure data channel, it is well known in the art that wireless connections implemented by computer systems and machines must be secure, especially when communicating sensitive data such as the information being transferred in a casino. Such secure channels may be implemented in several ways:

a password to access the wireless servers;

MAC ID filtering;

WEP and WPA encryption;

WPA2 encryption;

et al.

As the system of Brosnan implements a communication interface capable of wireless communication (for example, a wireless router/receiver such as one manufactured by Linksys implementing the 802.11g protocol), one skilled in the art would have the knowledge to secure the wireless data with one of the above methods, and thus, would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made, as it is a well known improvement in the art that yields a predictable result. Furthermore, a person of ordinary skill has good reason to pursue the known options

within his or her technical grasp. If this leads to anticipated success, it is likely the product not of innovation but of ordinary skill and common sense. In this case, the anticipated success is that of a secure wireless channel.

However, Brosnan is silent on the secure wireless devices being wireless servers structured to couple to the one or more information servers and being distributed around a gaming floor. Garahi teaches a wagering interface in which an information server is utilized (figure 2, 104, 100, and 102). Coupled to this is a wireless server (116). The use of multiple servers is a well known feature in the art used to reduce the load of a single server, since it is also a well known fact that multiple devices performing a single task performs said task more efficiently and faster than one single device. Furthermore, due to the nature of wireless signals, the wireless server must be in a location in which the devices are in range, else no devices would be able to make any kind of connection, thus the server must be in the gaming area to provide a strong, stable signal. The location of the actual servers is an obvious design choice – one skilled in the art would find it obvious to place the servers anywhere, including the gaming floor, as it produces no unpredictable results.

Brosnan is also silent on the wireless receiver being portable, coupled via a wireless link to wireless servers. Garahi teaches several portable wireless devices that communicate with wireless servers (paragraph [0057], figure 1, 18). Being wireless devices, the devices must communicate via a wireless link. It is inherent that a device that communicates with a wireless server must be able to receive a wireless signal as well, otherwise there would only be one-way communication, and the server would not

be able to send a verification signal to the device, confirming connection for security and/or stability purpose, and thus, devices 18 are also wireless receivers.

Finally, the above are silent on the servers being located in an area of the gaming floor, and wherein the at least one secure wireless server is structured to create a session with the receiver only at certain times and terminates sessions if the receiver is not used for a predetermined period of time. The location of servers is an obvious design choice – one skilled in the art would be able to place servers in any location desired, especially due to the fact that they are wireless. Furthermore, the wireless links are created based on the proximity of the secure wireless receiver to the at least one secure wireless server (paragraph [0038]). Kaminkow teaches creating a portable, wireless receiver (figure 3, 358). A server creates a session with the wireless receiver upon the initiation of a gaming event, and ends the session if the receiver is not used for a predetermined period of time (paragraph [0187], a timeout condition).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize the wireless servers of Garahi in order to provide a convenient and wireless method of providing connectivity to players in the area, while utilizing the methods of Kaminkow in order to communicate information between a server and client wirelessly, while saving energy and preventing unneeded connectivity by terminating sessions after a timeout.

5. Re claim 3, Brosnan discloses the session is limited in duration, as the session lasts only as long as the player plays the gaming machine (column 19, lines 30-57).

6. Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brosnan in view of Garahi, Kaminkow, and Paulsen et al (US 2003/0054868 A1).

7. Re claim 5, Brosnan discloses a system for redeeming tickets comprising:

one or more information servers on a gaming network, the one or more information servers configured to store data related to past play of gaming machines and related to players of the gaming machines, and to generate data for use on the gaming network (column 19, lines 30-58);

data stored on the one or more information servers relating to transactions previously memorialized by a ticket (column 18, lines 47-55).

Please refer to the discussion of claim 1 regarding the wireless server and receiver. Brosnan, Garahi, and Kaminkow do not disclose the redemption server configured to redeem an award memorialized by a ticket, including a first and second interface with a docking station to store the receiver so as to be in communication therewith.

Paulsen teaches a gaming system in which tickets may be redeemed by a server for prizes (paragraphs [0052] and [0123]). Paulsen also discloses that a prize server (figure 1, 64) includes a touch screen interface (paragraph [0052]). As devices in the network may be communicating wirelessly (paragraph [0017]), the game device 90 is using the touch screen interface to select prizes, while the server may use a wireless interface to communicate with the gaming machine.

Thus, it would have been obvious to utilize the interfaces of Paulsen in order to allow users to redeem prizes without needing to physically walk to a separate

redemption area, instead staying at their gaming machine and redeeming the prizes, increasing convenience.

8. Re claim 6, Brosnan discloses a session detector, where the session detector is a card reader used to initiate a gaming session for a player (column 19, lines 30-45).

9. Re claim 7, Brosnan discloses the ticket identifier correctly identifies a previously memorialized transaction (column 18, lines 18-27).

10. Re claim 8, Brosnan discloses the information servers are configured to generate redemption data (column 18, lines 46-55).

11. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brosnan in view of Garahi, Kaminkow, and Paulsen as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Stern (US 6,110,044).

Brosnan, Kaminkow, Paulsen, and Garahi have been discussed above, but are silent on the redemption data including the date and time a ticket was redeemed. Stern teaches a ticket redemption system in which the date and time of a ticket's creation is printed on the ticket (figure 2). Furthermore, upon redemption, a record is stored containing data relating to it, including the date and time of redemption (column 9, lines 5-17). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize the date and time system of Stern in order to prevent counterfeit duplicates of winning tickets from being redeemed.

Response to Arguments

12. Applicant's arguments filed 3/2/2010 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The examiner notes that while the interfaces of Brosnan may be located inside or on a top box of a gaming machine and wired, Garahi has been cited specifically to teach a wireless device. Simply because Brosnan uses a wired device does not mean that the possibility of using any wireless device is impossible; using a wireless device does not defeat the purpose of Brosnan. One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to replace any wired device with a wireless version, as it yields the predictable result of freedom of movement of the devices in question. Similarly, any wired connection could be replaced by a wireless one with the same reasoning.

Finally, the examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant's notion that since the wireless interfaces taught above are not explicitly disclosed to be distributed around a gaming floor in which gaming machines are available for play, and that "in range" is not sufficient. The examiner asserts that it is clearly obvious that devices in wireless communication may be located anywhere desired by those implementing them, including a gaming floor area. Not being able to position these devices conveniently would defeat the very purpose of using them in the first place.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to KEVIN Y. KIM whose telephone number is (571)270-

3215. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on 571-272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/John M Hotaling II/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3714

/K. Y. K./
Examiner, Art Unit 3714